

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A disposable absorbent article for personal wear, said disposable absorbent article comprising:

5 a generally liquid permeable liner adapted for contiguity with the wearer's skin;

an outer cover; and

10 an absorbent body between the liner and the outer cover for absorbing liquid body waste penetrating the liner, said absorbent body comprising a first zone and a second zone, the first zone having a lower absorbent capacity per unit weight than the second zone and facilitating the flow of liquid body waste from the first zone back through the liner for indicating to the wearer the release of liquid body waste into said article.

2. A disposable absorbent article as set forth in claim 1 wherein the absorbent body comprises a wetness indicating zone defining said first zone and an absorbent zone defining said second zone, the absorbent zone being adjacent the wetness indicating zone.

5 3. A disposable absorbent article as set forth in claim 1 wherein the absorbent body comprises a wetness indicating zone defining said first zone and a pair of absorbent zones defining said second zone and being adjacent the wetness indicating zone, said wetness indicating zone being intermediate said absorbent zones.

4. A disposable absorbent article as set forth in claim 3 wherein the wetness indicating zone comprises hydrophilic fibers and each absorbent zone comprises a mixture of hydrophilic fibers and superabsorbent material.

5 5. A disposable absorbent article as set forth in claim 4 wherein the wetness indicating zone comprises a mixture of hydrophilic fibers and superabsorbent material, the concentration of superabsorbent material in the wetness indicating zone being less than the concentration of superabsorbent material in each absorbent zone.

6. A disposable absorbent article as set forth in claim 4 wherein the wetness indicating zone comprises a low density cellulosic fluff and each absorbent zone comprises a mixture of a high density cellulosic fluff and superabsorbent material.

7. A disposable absorbent article as set forth in claim 5 wherein the wetness indicating zone has a concentration of superabsorbent material of less than or equal to about fifteen percent by weight thereof.

8. A disposable absorbent article as set forth in claim 7 wherein each absorbent zone has a concentration of superabsorbent material of at least about forty percent by weight of the absorbent body.

9. A disposable absorbent article as set forth in claim 3 wherein the wetness indicating zone has a width of about thirty percent to about seventy percent of the total width of the absorbent body.

10. A disposable absorbent article as set forth in claim 1 wherein the absorbent body comprises an inner zone defining said first zone and an outer zone defining said second zone, the inner zone being nearer the liner than the outer zone.

11. A disposable absorbent article as set forth in claim 10 wherein the inner zone comprises hydrophilic fibers and the outer zone comprises superabsorbent material.

12. A disposable absorbent article as set forth in claim 11 wherein the inner zone comprises a mixture of hydrophilic fibers and superabsorbent material, the outer zone also comprising a mixture of hydrophilic fibers and superabsorbent material, the concentration of superabsorbent material in said inner zone being less than the concentration of superabsorbent material in said outer zone.

13. A disposable absorbent article as set forth in claim 11 wherein the inner zone comprises only hydrophilic fibers.

14. A disposable absorbent article as set forth in claim 11 wherein the outer zone comprises only superabsorbent material.

15. A disposable absorbent article as set forth in claim 9 wherein the outer zone has a thickness of between about one percent and about seventy percent of the thickness of the absorbent body.

16. A disposable absorbent article as set forth in claim 10 wherein the outer zone has a weight of between about twenty percent and about seventy percent by weight of the absorbent body.

17. A disposable absorbent article as set forth in claim 16 wherein the outer zone has a weight of between about thirty-five percent and about fifty percent by weight of the absorbent body.

18. A disposable absorbent article as set forth in claim 10 wherein the outer zone has a concentration of superabsorbent material of at least about forty percent by weight thereof.

19. Toilet training pants comprising:

an anterior region, a posterior region and a crotch region disposed longitudinally therebetween, said anterior region, posterior region and crotch region being integrally formed and configured to define a central waist opening and a pair of leg openings of said pants, the crotch region extending generally laterally between said leg openings;

a generally liquid permeable liner extending from the anterior region through the crotch region to the posterior region of said pants and being adapted for contiguity with the wearer's skin;

an outer cover; and

an absorbent body between the liner and the outer cover for absorbing liquid body waste penetrating the liner, said absorbent body comprising a first zone and a second zone, the first zone having a lower absorbent capacity per unit weight than the second zone and being capable of facilitating the flow of liquid body waste from the first zone back through the liner for indicating to the wearer the release of liquid body waste into said training pants.

20. Training pants as set forth in claim 19 wherein the absorbent body comprises a wetness indicating zone defining said first zone and an absorbent zone defining said second zone, the absorbent zone being adjacent the wetness indicating zone in side-by-side, abutting relation therewith.

21. Training pants as set forth in claim 19 wherein the absorbent body comprises a wetness indicating zone defining said first zone and a pair of

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absorbent zones defining said second zone, the central wetness indicating zone being disposed between the absorbent zones in side-by-side, abutting relation therewith.

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22. Training pants as set forth in claim 21 wherein the wetness indicating zone comprises hydrophilic fibers and each absorbent zone comprises a mixture of hydrophilic fibers and superabsorbent material.

23. Training pants as set forth in claim 22 wherein the wetness indicating zone comprises a mixture of hydrophilic fibers and superabsorbent material, the concentration of superabsorbent material in the wetness indicating zone being less than the concentration of superabsorbent material in each absorbent zone.

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24. Training pants as set forth in claim 22 wherein the wetness indicating zone comprises a low density cellulosic fluff and each absorbent zone comprises a mixture of a high density cellulosic fluff and superabsorbent material.

25. Training pants as set forth in claim 23 wherein the wetness indicating zone has a concentration of superabsorbent material of less than or equal to about fifteen percent by weight thereof.

26. Training pants as set forth in claim 25 wherein each absorbent zone has a concentration of superabsorbent material of at least about forty percent by weight thereof.

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27. Training pants as set forth in claim 21 wherein the central wetness indicating zone has a width of about thirty percent to about seventy percent of the width of the absorbent body.

28. Training pants as set forth in claim 19 wherein the absorbent body comprises an inner zone defining said first zone and an outer zone defining said second zone, the inner zone being nearer the liner than the outer zone.

29. Training pants as set forth in claim 28 wherein the inner zone comprises hydrophilic fibers and the outer zone comprises superabsorbent material.

30. Training pants as set forth in claim 29 wherein the inner zone comprises a mixture of hydrophilic fibers and superabsorbent material, the outer zone also comprising a mixture of hydrophilic fibers and superabsorbent material, the concentration of superabsorbent material in said inner zone being less than the concentration of superabsorbent material in said outer zone.

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31. Training pants as set forth in claim 29 wherein the inner zone comprises only hydrophilic fibers.

32. Training pants as set forth in claim 29 wherein the outer zone comprises only superabsorbent material.

33. Training pants as set forth in claim 28 wherein the outer zone has a thickness of between about one percent and about seventy percent of the thickness of the absorbent body.

34. Training pants as set forth in claim 28 wherein the outer zone has a weight of between about twenty percent and about seventy percent of the weight of the absorbent body.

35. Training pants as set forth in claim 34 wherein the outer zone has a weight of between about thirty-five percent and about fifty percent of the weight of the absorbent body.

36. A disposable absorbent article as set forth in claim 29 wherein the outer zone has a concentration of superabsorbent material of at least about forty percent by weight of the absorbent body.

37. A method of manufacturing an absorbent body for a disposable absorbent article of the type having a liner, an outer cover and an absorbent body between the liner and outer cover for absorbing liquid body waste penetrating the liner, the absorbent body having a width and comprising a wetness indicating zone disposed between absorbent zones in generally side-by-side abutting relation therewith, said method comprising:

5 concurrently depositing hydrophilic fibers and superabsorbent material on a surface to form the absorbent body, said hydrophilic fibers being deposited generally uniformly across the absorbent body, the concentration of 10 superabsorbent material deposited in the wetness indicating zone being lower than the concentration of superabsorbent material deposited in the absorbent zones.

38. A method as set forth in claim 37 wherein the superabsorbent material is deposited solely in the absorbent zones.

5 39. A method as set forth in claim 37 further comprising the step of compacting the absorbent body, said compacting step comprising compacting the hydrophilic fibers in the wetness indicating zone less than the hydrophilic fibers in the absorbent zones.

10 40. A method of manufacturing an absorbent body for a disposable absorbent article of the type having a liner, an outer cover and an absorbent body between the liner and outer cover for absorbing liquid body waste penetrating the liner, the absorbent body having a width and comprising a wetness indicating zone disposed between absorbent zones in generally side-by-side abutting relation therewith, said method comprising:

15 concurrently depositing hydrophilic fibers and superabsorbent material on a surface to form the absorbent body, the concentration of hydrophilic fibers deposited in the wetness indicating zone being greater than the concentration of fibers deposited in the absorbent zones, the concentration of superabsorbent material deposited in the wetness indicating zone being lower than the concentration of superabsorbent material deposited in each absorbent zone.

41. A method as set forth in claim 40 wherein the superabsorbent material is deposited solely in the absorbent zones.

42. A method as set forth in claim 40 further comprising the step of uniformly compacting the absorbent body whereby the hydrophilic fibers in the absorbent zones are more compacted than the hydrophilic fibers in the wetness indicating zone as the absorbent body is uniformly compacted.

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43. A disposable absorbent article for personal wear, said disposable absorbent article comprising:

a generally liquid permeable liner adapted for contiguity with the wearer's skin;

5 an outer cover; and

an absorbent body between the liner and outer cover for absorbing liquid body waste penetrating the liner, said absorbent body comprising a mixture of hydrophilic fibers and superabsorbent material, the mixture having a concentration of superabsorbent material therein of between about one percent and about seven percent by weight of the mixture to facilitate the flow of liquid body waste from the absorbent body back through the liner for indicating to the wearer the release of liquid body waste into said article.

44. A disposable absorbent article as set forth in claim 43 wherein the absorbent body is capable of maintaining at least about 1 gram of unabsorbed liquid body waste therein per 1 gram of absorbent body weight for a period of up to about ten minutes following the release of liquid body waste into said article.

45. A disposable absorbent article as set forth in claim 44 wherein the absorbent body is capable of maintaining at least about 1.5 grams of unabsorbed liquid body waste therein per 1 gram of absorbent body weight for a period of up to about ten minutes following the release of liquid body waste into the article.

5 46. A disposable absorbent article for personal wear, said disposable absorbent article comprising:

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a generally liquid permeable liner adapted for contiguity with the wearer's skin;

5 an outer cover; and
an absorbent body between the liner and outer cover for absorbing liquid body waste penetrating the liner, said absorbent body having a width of at least about sixty percent of the width of said article and comprising a mixture of hydrophilic fibers and superabsorbent material, the mixture having a concentration of superabsorbent material therein of between about one percent and about fifteen percent by weight of the mixture to facilitate the flow of liquid body waste from the absorbent body back through the liner for indicating to the wearer the release of liquid body waste into said article.

10 47. A disposable absorbent article as set forth in claim 46 wherein the mixture has a concentration of superabsorbent material of between about one percent and about seven percent by weight of the mixture.

48. A disposable absorbent article as set forth in claim 46 wherein the absorbent body is capable of maintaining at least about 1 gram of unabsorbed liquid body waste therein per 1 gram of absorbent body weight for a period of up to about ten minutes following the release of liquid body waste into the article.

5 49. A disposable absorbent article as set forth in claim 48 wherein the absorbent body is capable of maintaining at least about 1.5 grams of unabsorbed liquid body waste therein per 1 gram of absorbent body weight for a period of up to about ten minutes following the release of liquid body waste into the article.